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Making Precarious Immigrant Families and Weaving the Danish Welfare Nation-State Fabric 1970-2010

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This article explores the making of immigrant families as precarious elements in the governing of the population's welfare within the Danish welfare nation-state since the 1970s. The emphasis is on how immigrant families became a problem of welfare governing, and what knowledge practices and welfare technologies emerged as problem-solving responses. The article analyses a diverse set of national and local administrative documents advancing a polyhedron of intelligibility by which the authors discover how problem-solving complexes responsive to immigrant families change and sediment, and ultimately, weave the fabric of a Danish welfare nation-state faced with non-Western immigration after the economic boom in the late 1960s.

Keywords: Immigrant families; problematisation; liberal paradox; risk; welfare nation-state; Denmark

Introduction

As a result of the economic boom and labour shortage in the late 1960s, the Danish government invited labour migrants to work in Danish industries. The labour migrants came primarily from Southern Europe, Turkey, Pakistan, and Morocco, and they were expected to return to their home countries when there was no more work for them to do. In spite of an administrative halt on the issuing of work permits in 1973 as an effect of the oil crisis, the immigration of non-Westerners continued. Since then 'people have arrived either as refugees or as family members to immigrants, i.e. via family unification' (Siim and Borchorst 2008, 9).

This reconfiguration of immigration to Denmark after 1973 altered the problematisation of immigrants as primarily one of single male low-skilled guest workers' position in the Danish labour market to one of non-Western immigrant families' welfare (Jønsson and Petersen 2010).

Initially, these non-Western labour immigrant families were met by a universal welfare system in terms of health care, education, housing etc. In this case, universalism referred to tax financed social tutelage, flat rate benefits, and was guided by ideas of equality, prevention and rationality (Kolstrup 2014). However, this universalistic welfare model was historically premised on an implicit notion of 'a homogeneous population in an enclosed national space' (Jønsson and Petersen 2012, 100) anchoring universal social rights to national citizenship.

The historical wedding of welfare and nation in the formation of Western modern states has been problematized by Lessenich coining it in terms of a liberal paradox (2012, 310). This paradox refers to Western modern nation-states that have essentially been built on capitalism, and hence, have sought to mobilize the productive forces of the population (understood as a territorially unlimited commodity) through welfare governing (understood in terms of territorially delimited decommodification). In other words, labour immigrants were cast as

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potentially productive and as such treasured, 'but at the same time (and on the very same ground of their mobility), they are potentially dangerous – and risky' (Lessenich 2012, 308).

Thus, an intriguing historical point of departure for this article is the fact that the development of the Danish welfare model peaked in the late 1960s (Christensen and Ydesen 2009), exactly at the point when Denmark was faced with the effects of post-WWII economic reconstruction, which had the consequences of globalizing hitherto nationally enclosed labour markets (Jønsson and Petersen 2012, 100).

Problematisations of the presence of settled non-Western immigrant families are therefore understood in relation to the perceived contestation of the imagined bounded whole of the nation-state as well as in relation to a universalistic welfare regime under pressure. Simon Warren has lucidly coined the situation facing post-WWII western welfare nation-states as one of 'ontological insecurity'. 'The formation of policy in relation to the education of new migrant communities should therefore be understood in the context of a political concern about the unsettling nature of new global flows of people' (Warren 2007, 373).

This demonstrates the importance of paying attention to the handling of immigrant families in the unique historical post-1970 context of the Danish welfare nation-state. As such, the study of the governing of immigrant families' welfare functions as a privileged prism through which to study the weaving of the fabric fashioning the Danish welfare nation-state in an era of increasing immigration. In the same vein, Foucault (1991a) argued that state fashioning could best be studied in practices where the hitherto social order was perceived to be contested. In keeping with the metaphorical language of this article, we study the fashioning of the Danish welfare nation-state as a fabric weaved and patterned by various political, administrative, social, economic, cultural threads. Arguably, the weaving together of this state fabric crystallizes most lucidly in instances of knots and frays; i.e. when the welfare nation-state is faced with (un)settling immigrant families.

Previous research on the post-1970 state-immigrant nexus has focused on the encounter between non-Western immigrants and the apparatus of welfare provision (schools, housing, childcare, social insurance etc.) and/or paid attention to immigrants' identity formation through notions of belonging and citizenship in relation to the national context of their new lives (Alsmark, Moldenhawer, and Kallehave 2007; Faist 2000). Arguably, there is a tendency to separate the perspectives of welfare and nation. Nevertheless, we explore the analytical potential of merging the two perspectives by addressing the following two research questions: What problem-solving complexes have emerged from administrative knowledge practices responsive to the welfare of immigrant families? How do these problem-solving complexes resonate with the fashioning of the Danish welfare nation-state 1970-2010?

In the first section, we present an analytical strategy on how to study practices that weave a state fabric. This is followed by methodological considerations on the historical documentary material used in the analysis. In the third section, we unfold an analysis of the problem-solving complexes responsive to the presence of immigrant families in Denmark. In conclusion, we show how problem-solving complexes responsive to non-Western immigrant families have fashioned the fabric of a Danish welfare nation-state faced with the immigrant presence.

Analytical Strategy

In a context of increased international migration the social question of fostering prosperity by managing welfare seems to resonate with Foucault's analysis of social warfare (Foucault 2004). The notion of social warfare frames the governing of immigrant families' welfare as a matter of compensating for variations within the optimal general population. In other words, welfare governing as a practice of social warfare becomes 'the administrative prose of a State that defends itself in the name of a social heritage that has to be kept pure' (Foucault 2004, 83) – or normal and productive.

Within this framework of thinking about welfare governing since the late 19th century, Hansen (1995) argues, the perception of social problems was relocated from an ethical level to an ontological level by means of statistics, which provided 'evidence' of the desirable 'normal social body'. Among the solutions was a reformulation of the family from being a model of governing to an instrument of integration and normalisation of society. As such, the family unit, and the children in particular, became the object of intervention and regulation. 'Integration is conditional upon the proliferation and support of the norm. Not surprisingly, the connection between the family and the school becomes a privileged instrument for normalisation' (Hansen 1995, 21 our translation).

These introductory notes on the governing practices that have fashioned modern welfare nation-states calls for an analytical strategy that addresses the state fabric as 'nothing else but the mobile effect of a regime of multiple governmentalities' (Foucault 2008, 77) constituting a space of (im)possible thinking and acting. In a strategic analytical manoeuvre, we decentre the state fabric as an object of analysis (Foucault 2009, 116-120). Accordingly, we look for the weaving of a state fabric in governing practices responsive to immigrant families who have been constructed as a problem to the common welfare of the Danish population, which also includes a perceived contestation of the cohesion and prosperity of the Danish welfare nation-state.

In her reception of Foucault's work, Bacchi (2012) suggests studying practical regimes of governing by means of a problematisation analysis. Consequently, we have identified how immigrant families became problematised, and what forms of knowledge and what welfare technologies emerged from the efforts made to understand and solve the constructed problem(s) (Bacchi 2012). Such a problematisation study conceptualizes the regimes of practices as micropolitics of the state (Ball 2013). A chronological ordering of the material has helped us discover how the problem-solving complexes responsive to immigrant families have changed and sedimented. In this way, we have identified the practical implications of governing through the welfare of immigrant families that in turn suggests how the Danish welfare nation-state fabric was fashioned as a response to questions and problem constructions pertaining to the presence of immigrant families.

Practical Texts

In this article, we engage with a historical collection of the voluminous, anonymous, grey and practical literature (Bacchi 2012) produced by national and local administrative bodies responsive to immigrant families, and their children of school age in particular, from 1970-2010. The material comprises a variety of documents produced by administrators, experts and

professionals. These documents induce effects in the real (Foucault 1991b, 81) inasmuch as 'they were designed to be read, learned, reflected upon, and tested out' (Bacchi 2012, 3).

The collection of material comprises nine commission reports covering the four decades timespan (Ministry of Labour 1971; Ministry of Social Affairs 1975 and 1981; Ministry of Education 1987; Ministry of Finance 1991; Ministry of Internal Affairs 1997 and 1998; Ministry of Refugees, Immigrants and Integration 2009; Ministry of Justice 2009). These reports have been identified by means of a comprehensive search in the Danish Law Gazette using search words that mirrored the historical variety of categories pertaining to members of immigrant families (e.g. 'guest worker', 'foreigner', 'Turkish', 'bilingual', 'integration', 'citizenship')

The collection also includes 200 locally produced documents (reports, statistics, policy recommendations, evaluations, project descriptions and evaluations, and letters of guidance). These documents have been collected by means of a chain-search and the identification of intertextual references. As the result of an initial conversation with two research colleagues¹ with many years of experience in the field of education of immigrants, we were handed over the personal archives of former professor of bilingualism Jørgen Gimbel. This archive comprised a collection of a variety of locally produced documents on the situation and handling of immigrant children of school age in various Danish municipalities² (1979-2002). Following recurring references from this archive, we contacted three retired and two still active professionals³ specialized in the education of immigrant children. They allowed us to access their personal archives that contributed with essential documents produced between 1985 and 2010. A few missing documents that had been referred to were obtained by means of a library search.

The collection of such diverse documents constitutes a network of texts illustrative of the production and exchange of documents between different administrative bodies, schools, universities and ministries engaged in governing the welfare of immigrant families, and their children of school age in particular. Moreover, the collection of documents resonates with the Danish situation, which is characterised by a decentralized bottom-up approach to social and educational development, in general, (Hulgård 1997; Skov 2005) and welfare governing vis-à-vis immigrant families, in particular (Hetmar 1991; Jønsson and Petersen 2012).

The analytical potential of this network of texts lies in reading across it for its breadth of information. This means that we do not present an in-depth analysis of every single document. Rather, our cross-readings of the material have paved the way for the identification of patterns of governing the welfare of immigrant families – and ultimately, patterns in the weaving of a state fabric – across time and across fields of welfare governing.

Nested Problems

As a first step in a problematisation study, it becomes pertinent to ask whom our analytical category 'immigrant families' refers to empirically and historically. The first people to fit this category were the labour immigrants (primarily male Turkish, Yugoslav, Pakistani and Moroccan), who found work in Denmark in the late 1960s and who were later reunified with their spouses and children. From the early 1980s, different refugee groups (such as Vietnamese, Iranian, Iraqi, Palestinian, Somali, and Bosnian) were included. In the 1990s, the

category began to include the children of the first generation of immigrant families, and in the 2000s, the category was populated by the third and fourth generations of these immigrant/refugee families. As the following analysis will show, various problematisations pertaining to e.g. labour market issues, immigration regulations, and cultural incorporation have produced articulations such as 'foreign workers', 'aliens', 'bilingual children', and 'Muslims' that have been attached to members of non-Western immigrant families.

This short preview of the problematized objects in problem-solving complexes responsive to the welfare of immigrant families indicates that one problem construction rarely stands alone, but is nested in other problem-solving complexes (Edelman 1988, 36). Thus, problematisations of immigrant families are related to e.g. labour market policies, school performance or anti-terrorism measures. Accordingly, our analysis rests on the construction of 'a "polyhedron" of intelligibility' (Foucault 1991b, 77) based empirically and historically on a network of texts covering a variety of fields in which attempts have been made to manage the welfare of immigrant families. This means that the phenomenon of managing the welfare of immigrant families has been explored in a variety of instances of problem construction and problem solving.

If They only Knew How to Make Use of Welfare Provisions...

In the 1970s, immigrant families were perceived as a labour market issue and managed according to their adaptability to the Danish welfare system (Ministry of Labour 1971). In other words, it was problematized that immigrant families did not make adequate use of various life-quality-enhancing welfare provisions that would ultimately secure their status as part of a productive workforce and as active participants in society. In a commission report on foreign workers' living conditions in Denmark, it was noted that

foreign workers have been exploited on the labour market and in the housing market. Insufficient Danish language skills, lack of knowledge about Danish customs, and few encounters with Danes may cause the foreigners to feel excluded from Danish society (Ministry of Labour 1971, 5 our translation).

Poor housing and health conditions, lack of Danish language competences and non-participation in organized leisure time activities were presented as issues of pressing concern for the governing of immigrant families' welfare. These concerns mirrored the operating interior of a Danish welfare system (Ministry of Labour 1971, 53) thought to care for the well-being of the worker and his family. Accordingly, immigrant families were met with empathy and problematised as the precariat of the economic boom, and later, as victims of unemployment due to the oil crisis in 1973. Still, there was a firm belief in immigrant families' potential to adapt to the Danish way of living and to benefit from welfare provisions. This potential was believed to be proportionate to their length of residence: the longer the stay, the more adaptable. 'The workers who wish to stay here should have an interest in adapting to the Danish way of living. From a societal perspective, this should also be the goal' (Arbejdsministeriet 1971, 62 our translation).

In order to foster a 'Danish way of living' among immigrants, there was a call for new knowledge on two pressing matters. One involved improving the coverage of basic statistics on the immigrant population (Ministry of Social Affairs 1975, 32) on the basis of which immigrants' needs could be forecasted in order to provide them with equal access to welfare provisions (Immigrant Committee 1975). This strand of statistics proved to be mostly concerned with immigrants from non-Western countries, despite the fact that the majority of labour immigrants in Denmark came from Scandinavian or other Western countries (Jønsson and Petersen 2012). A tenacious binary of Western and non-Western immigrant families was launched in the practices of Danish welfare governing, pointing to the future culturalisation of non-Western immigrant families. Thus, it is the governing and categorisation of non-Western immigrant families that appear to be most significant in our material. Western immigrant families are almost entirely ignored.

The other pressing matter involved 'best practice' borrowing. In the early 1970s, the local administration of Copenhagen Municipality began to pay attention to the increasing number of non-Western children of immigrant families in public schools. In 1971, the first manager of the office for foreign language speaking pupils in the Copenhagen administration, Erik Odde, visited the London Borough of Ealing to learn from English public schools' accommodation of immigrant children. Odde observed that

the Indians follow the exact same customs as in their countries of origin: upbringing, women's position in society etc. In Southall, this does not cause any problems, but in schools, conflicts arise provoked by the strictly raised children's encounter with the liberal, very liberal, English manner (1971, 6 our translation)

The Western/non-Western distinction influenced the dominant perception of the immigrant family environment as deprived and thus the main cause of the troublesome encounters between Danish teachers and immigrant schoolchildren (Bøgsted-Møller 1976). Immigrant schoolchildren were problematized as linguistically and socially ill-prepared for mainstream instruction in public school. Although contested, the English system of reception classes was established to compensate for the lack of adequate Danish language competences and cultural adaptation and to prepare immigrant schoolchildren for mainstream education. This model of reception was implemented not only in Copenhagen, but also in the suburbs of the wider capital area, where substantial numbers of immigrant families and their children settled (Laursen, Hjort, and Christensen 1973).

The first decade of managing the welfare of immigrant families and their children was based on a problematisation of immigrant families as victims of exploitation. They were also considered victims of their traditional cultural heritage, which supposedly caused their children to become culturally and socially isolated. As such, they were constructed as being at risk of disintegration. Based on the optimism inherent in social planning and universalistic welfare, a regime of compensating practices was thought to unleash the potential of immigrant families and their children to adapt to a healthy Danish way of living. This way of living was promoted in terms of membership of a self-sufficient nuclear family making proper use of the welfare system as well as contributing to society as responsible taxpayers, whereby a productive workforce and a cohesive society would be sustained.

Minding the Cultural Gap

Increasingly, during the 1980s, the notion of cultural distance was used to explain immigrant families' lack of adaptation to the Danish way of living. This can be seen in a commission report on children's living conditions in Denmark, where a special section was dedicated to immigrant children and their families.

The immigrant families come to Denmark from societies where family life is shaped in fundamentally different terms than it is among us. The children live their lives at home, which is a home shared by several generations and where the entire family participates in teaching the children their language, norms of conduct and the basic elements of their culture, before the children start in school. Arriving in Denmark, the family finds it difficult to continue this form of living and its integral patterns of upbringing. (Ministry of Social Affairs 1981, 228–229 our translation)

Because of the un-bridged gap between immigrant parents' culture of origin and the new Danish culture, immigrant children were problematized as being at risk of losing their identity and facing a cultural clash with the education system (Ministry of Social Affairs 1981, 229–230). This causal explanation was informed by social psychology suggesting that the development of the child was determined by the environment of its upbringing (Ministry of Education 1987, 48). Accordingly, the cultural gap between immigrant families and Danish society was considered causing psycho-social problems for immigrant children.

School psychologists perceived the ill-adapted immigrant schoolchildren as subjects torn between a traditional and a modern way of living. 'Immigrant children belong to a group at risk, since they themselves and their families have had their roots cut from the cultural and social context that normally constitutes the background for the identity formation of these people' (Sahl and Skjeltmose 1983, 10 our translation). According to Sahl and Skjeltmose the solution was to establish a coherence 'between the Muslim ideal-me – obedience and suppression of one's own needs – and the ideal-me of the school – initiative and individuality' (1983, 62–63 our translation).

In an attempt to prevent immigrant children from losing themselves between two cultures, experimental bi-cultural classes were initiated in the late 1980s (Clausen et al. 1985). The experiments were based on the assumption that Danish language acquisition was best stimulated and advanced with the use of the pupils' mother tongue. Accordingly, the bicultural classes were organised around 'a group of Danish pupils and a group of pupils (6-10 children) whose parents originate from Turkey' (Moldenhawer and Clausen 1993, 2 our translation). A native Danish teacher and a bilingual teacher with an immigrant (Turkish) background were affiliated with the class. In the first report on the pedagogical experiment, Clausen et al. wrote that they 'wished to develop bi-cultural schooling in order to counter prejudices and ensure a better integration of immigrant pupils in school' (1985, 1 our translation). However, bi-cultural classes were politically and pedagogically contested, and they never became a permanent technology of education. Instead, remedial instruction was promoted as the most efficient way of incorporating immigrant schoolchildren into mainstream education (Ahmad et al. 1985).

The practice of remedial instruction followed in the path of the compensating practices of the 1970s with the aim of alleviating the problems encountered when immigrant children entered school, 'because they do not speak nor understand Danish sufficiently. Moreover, because they are not familiar with the Danish way of thinking, norms and manners' (Bolwig et al. 1987, 24 our translation).

From this regime of remedial practices followed an expanded problematisation of immigrant parents – and especially immigrant mothers – as ill-prepared rearers with an out-dated way of bringing up their children. Mothers of immigrant children were addressed in terms of local provision of Danish language courses and information about the Danish way of living. Informing immigrant mothers on Danish values related to upbringing and active participation in civil society was considered preventive welfare work with the aim of minimizing the risk of cultural deviation among immigrant children supposedly caused by traditional upbringing (Padovan-Özdemir 2014). These observations work as an example of how immigrant families became not only an object but also an instrument of welfare governing – i.e. of integration. Similarly, immigrant consultant Klaus Slavensky (1985, 7–8) argued for the development of welfare provisions targeting all generations of the immigrant family, which would allow all family members to participate in cultural activities in their local area. These interventions were perceived as a temporary exceptional expansion of the general welfare work with the aim of normalising and aligning immigrant families with the Danish way of living. According to Slavensky, the aim of these exceptional measures was not least to avoid immigrant families 'turning into a new burdensome proletariat' (1985, 81 our translation).

Although fostering a Danish way of living was the goal of exceptional welfare work, the social psychological reasoning remained influential. Where the experiment of bi-cultural classes was only a momentary practice, mother tongue instruction was much more successfully promoted. Mother tongue instruction was believed to be not only a human right (Skutnabb-Kangas 1988) and a means of preserving immigrant children's anchorage with their parents' culture of origin in order to ease their return to their parents' country of origin, if this should be relevant. It was also promoted as a means of learning Danish, as in the case of bi-cultural classes, and notably as a means of strengthening immigrant children's self-esteem as a minority. For not only were immigrant children believed to be at risk of linguistic, social and cultural deprivation in respect to their adaptation to a Danish way of living, but also at risk of not reaching an age-adequate level in their mother tongue. Here, mother tongue instruction was a solution that could be practiced in parallel with practices of remediation. However, in 2002 state-subsidies for mother tongue instruction of non-Scandinavian and non-EU citizens were abolished. This act of welfare retrenchment resulted in a substantial diminishing of the publicly funded provision of mother tongue instruction. Once again, the Western/non-Western distinction was drawn through the social body pointing to the national-cultural embedding of universalistic welfare provision – and, in the words of Lessenich (2012, 310), radicalising the liberal paradox.

Radicalising Responsibilisation

In the 1990s, questions were raised as to whether the exceptional measures and remedial investments in saving immigrant schoolchildren at risk from failing in school were paying off (Mehlbye 1994). This concern emerged against the backdrop of high youth unemployment rates in the 1980s (Martin 2009) and the implementation of New Public Management (Andersen 2008). In addition, it epitomized a shift from welfare governing practices based on rights and citizens' proper use of welfare provision to welfare governing based on the duties of the self-sufficient taxpayer (Kolstrup 2014). Bilingual pupil consultant, Niels Poulsen's report from a local survey of the educational tracks of bilingual pupils lucidly illustrates this shift:

[I]t can be said that the expenditure on remediation of bilingual children and youngsters in public schools amply pays off when young people get an education, a job and later pay tax. For me, however, it is just as important that this group is assisted in disassociating from the role of client/victim, which too many of their parents have found themselves playing. (Poulsen 1999, 3 our translation)

The quote also alludes to a decline in the social optimism of the 1970s about the potential adaptability of the first generation of non-Western immigrant families. Rather, they were now problematized in terms of representing a worrying social heritage, which 'bilingual children and youngsters' were 'assisted in disassociating themselves from'.

As such, local and national statistical tracking of the life courses of immigrant families in Denmark presented an epistemological backdrop for re-problematisations of immigrant families. This knowledge practice crystallized in the Ministry of Finance's commissioning of a report on the advancement of statistics on refugees and immigrants in 1991. The report responded to a wish for more detailed quantifiable categories of immigrant families in terms of demographic data, socioeconomic variables and country of origin (1991, 19). Based on the premise of aligning colloquial terms with statistically valid categories, six categories were developed: 'asylum seekers', 'refugees', 'immigrants by family reunification', 'aliens/foreign citizens', 'immigrants', and 'second-generation immigrants' (1991, 10–17). The reason for advancing the statistical categories pertaining to immigrant families was to be able to monitor and calculate the welfare budgetary expenses 'caused' by these groups of the population.

The statistical tracking of immigrant family life pointed towards an economisation of the governing of immigrant families' welfare. Immigrant families were no longer only managed in terms of their need for support and information about the Danish way of living but rather as a (potential) economic burden to the Danish welfare nation-state. A precarious status that could easily be passed on to the next generations of immigrant families, as suggested in Poulsen's statement above.

One effect of the knowledge practices of 'life tracking' was that they introduced the problem of a 'generational gap' in immigrant families. According to a report on the integration of ethnic minority women commissioned by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, first-generation Turkish immigrant women were supposedly less inclined to learn Danish and lived more isolated from society than did the second and third generations (Ministry of Internal Affairs 1998, 97–98). Furthermore, the perception of generational differences was energized by the commission's observation of a statistical correlation between immigrant women's strong non-

Western cultural ties and a peripheral position in the labour market (Ministry of Internal Affairs 1998, 27).

One of the solutions in response to the problem-complex emerging from the suggested generational gap in immigrant families was once again found in targeting non-Western immigrant women/mothers. In a report on the school placement of 'foreign language speaking pupils', Aarhus Education Authorities argued that '[w]ithout special measures, these women cannot be expected to enter into a normal trustful cooperation with the child's school as a support for the child's linguistic, academic and social development' (Hindø and Darr 1991, 9 our translation). The immigrant family (immigrant mothers in particular) was to understand the Danish way of living and schooling. This understanding was believed to constitute a significant step in the development of immigrant children's life competences for participating in Danish society.

The social effect ascribed to culture was considered twofold. First, non-Western culture was seen as a barrier to immigrant women, preventing them from actively participating in society, which in turn affected their children negatively. Second, promoting adaptation to 'Danish culture' as the ultimate integration goal obligated immigrant families to subject themselves to preventive welfare measures.

The case of immigrant mothers exemplifies an emerging radicalisation of the responsabilisation of immigrant families in terms of their lack of economic self-sufficiency, lack of societal participation and, ultimately, their children's risk of social and academic inadaptability in school.

Risks of Socio-Cultural Epidemics and National Vulnerability

The radicalising responsabilisation of immigrant families energised the construction of immigrant schoolchildren as a group posing a risk due to their low academic performances. The problematisation of immigrant schoolchildren as academic underachievers emerged in a context where the cost-benefit analyses of the 1990s coincided with the comparatively bad test results among immigrant pupils in the Danish PISA survey around the turn of the millennium (OECD 2003). Poor academic performance was believed to constitute as much risk as cultural deviation and disintegration; notably, not only to individual immigrant schoolchildren but also to their native Danish classmates, the school's reputation and the competitiveness of the Danish welfare nation-state (Jacobsen 2012).

Illustrative of the problem-solving complex emerging from the PISA panic response to immigrant schoolchildren, a 'Copenhagen Model' of integration was introduced. In short, immigrant parents were offered exceptional counselling and guidance in order to voluntarily choose a school with fewer immigrant schoolchildren outside their local district. At the same time, attempts were made to encourage native Danish parents to keep their children at the very same local schools that immigrant parents were advised to leave. Pamela Anne Quiroz has described such practices as 'marketing diversity to different populations' (2013, 62). Accordingly, Copenhagen City council member Per Bregengaard argued that

schools with a better ethnic – and consequently social – mix are expected to achieve better academic results because of a friendship effect, which means that talented pupils raise the levels of

less talented pupils and that teachers become more ambitious because of the presence of more talented pupils. (Bregengaard 2005, 7)

In this argument, we see how the intertwinement of academic performance and ethnic/social status functions as a nested problem construction. Interestingly, it also illustrates the inverted construction of an epidemic risk of low-performing immigrant schoolchildren: If 'talented pupils raise the levels of less talented pupils' it must imply that less talented pupils lower the level of talented pupils. Similarly, Crozier and Davies (2008, 289) have observed how teachers in an everyday English school environment problematized South Asian pupils for failing to mix and engage in extracurricular activities due to their culture. The failure of mixing called forth the Janus-faced problem construction of immigrant schoolchildren as individually deprived of fruitful learning experiences and as a collective potential threat to the school's cohesion.

The tendency to depict immigrant schoolchildren as an epidemic threat to the social and academic cohesion of schools fuelled the practice of achieving the right mix by means of e.g. Danish language testing of immigrant school starters. Amending the Danish Education Act in 2005, combined with the introduction of the legal category of 'schoolchildren with a non-negligible need for support in Danish-as-a-second-language', (Jacobsen, 2012, 45–46), functioned as a de-racialised justification for placing immigrant schoolchildren outside of their local district school and thereby limiting their parent's free school choice.

The advancement of practices such as testing, screening and monitoring as welfare technologies in response to immigrant schoolchildren pertained not only to school placement. These practices also justified the placement of immigrant schoolchildren within the school in e.g. reception classes, selected mainstream classes, in centres of remedial language instruction or referred them to leisure time projects. As an example: based on an assessment of the immigrant pupil's Danish language proficiency and academic as well as social competences (Ishøj Municipality 2009), school headmasters in Ishøj Municipality determined 'what mainstream class the pupil would be assigned in order to supplement his/her reception class lessons, and possibly eventually be placed in' (Department of Children and Education 2009, 1).

Arguably resonating with a social warfare reasoning, the regime of 'right mixing' coincided with an emerging regime of deportation in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attack on New York and the Danish cartoon crisis in 2005. In 2009, a report was commissioned on the judicial possibility of deporting non-nationals and nationals with an immigrant background deemed to pose a threat to national security (Ministry of Refugees, Immigrants and Integration 2009). This commission report is the only one of the nine commission reports in this study that does not allude to any form of welfare work addressing immigrant families. Instead, and in combination with the above described regimes of 'right mixing', it epitomizes how members of (Muslim) immigrant families became redefined as threats, not only to school and community cohesion, but also to national security.

Up to this point in history, the statistical variable of length of residence had pertained to the expected mode of adaptation, work motivation and belonging to Danish society. In this 2009 report, length of residence was reconfigured as a scale for justifying the deportation of non-nationals or nationals with an immigrant background who had committed criminal

offenses: 'The longer a foreigner has resided in the country, the more serious the criminal act must be before the person in question can be deported' (Ministry of Refugees, Immigrants and Integration 2009, 32).

In this context, we can observe how the focus on passive, unemployed and ill-informed members of immigrant families in the 1990s was redirected onto potentially criminal members of (Muslim) immigrant families in the 2000s.

Immigrant Parents Revisited as Partners in Crime

Arguably, the war on terror unfolded not only as a foreign affair but also as an internal affair of national security and social cohesion (Mouritsen 2005). The (Muslim) immigrant family environment was reconstructed in the 2000s as a potential risk to national security, social order and the democratic values of the Danish welfare nation-state. In the words of Wacquant (2009), immigrant families were described as 'a problem population whose civic probity is by definition suspect and whose alleged work-avoiding "behaviors" must be urgently rectified' (2009, 98).

In 2009, the Ministry of Justice commissioned a report on juvenile delinquency (Ministry of Justice 2009). The report stressed the insignificance of ethnicity in determining the causes of crime committed by juvenile immigrants. Accordingly, the traumas of refugee families and the socio-economically deprived environment of many immigrant families were highlighted as key factors in the criminal propensity of juvenile immigrants. However, analyses with a focus on social factors functioned as a de facto racialization of juvenile delinquency.

As part of the implementation of the commission's recommendations on risk-based systematic identification and report on criminal children and adolescents and children and adolescents at risk of criminal behaviour, it is the perception of the commission that focus should be directed at children and adolescents with a refugee background who may have experienced traumatizing conditions in childhood (...) a group especially vulnerable to social problems and crime. (Ministry of Justice 2009, 115–116 our translation)

The argument about a de facto racialization is debatable as the commission report refers to the specific psychological traumas of refugee families. However, as Coppock and McGovern have demonstrated in the British context, when questions of vulnerability to radicalisation or crime propensity of immigrant juveniles are raised, a notable 'psychologisation of social problems' (2014, 246) emerges. Our analysis has shown that this has been the case in all matters relating to managing the welfare of immigrant families since the early 1980s in Denmark. The epistemic sedimentation of cultural-social-psychology informed the identification of risks in immigrant families. In response to the problematisation of immigrant children and youngsters as vulnerable to crime, radicalisation and disintegration, pedagogical practices of risk management evolved. Among these practices was a revisiting of immigrant parents as potential partners in crime. Home visits were a highly valued practice in a great many integration projects designed to prevent immigrant (Muslim) girls from dropping out of education and into early marriage (Deniz and Özdemir 2004) and to prevent immigrant

(Muslim) boys from falling into criminal ways or becoming radicalised and dropping out of education (Ishøj Municipality 2001).

The parents [of immigrant schoolchildren] can also be good partners, inasmuch as they support the development of the girl at home. Accordingly, the aim of the home visits was to inform us about the girls' family background, the parents' experiences/understanding of their child's schooling, and the general social and academic development of the child. A secondary aim was to obtain an insight into the parents' general self-perception in Danish society. (Deniz and Özdemir 2006, 1)

On the face of it, there were ambitions of empowering the immigrant family. However, what we see in this quote is how cultural-social-psychology comes to work in the identification of potential risks *within* the immigrant family by observing their background and personal experiences – 'all in the name of safeguarding [the children]' (Coppock and McGovern 2014, 248).

Concluding Remarks

Based on our analytical reconstruction of a polyhedron of problem constructions, knowledge practices, and welfare technologies spanning various fields of managing the welfare of immigrant families, we have identified how the making of precarious immigrant families has remained fundamental to the governing of their welfare.

When non-Western immigrant workers and their families were first observed as objects of welfare governing in the 1970s, they were problematised as victims of economic and structural conditions, yet believed to have the potential to adapt to a Danish way of living if subjected to compensating measures enlightening them about the benefits of the universalistic welfare system. Their deviating traditional non-Western background was believed to cause their children to be at risk of social disintegration in school life.

Minding the cultural gap, the popularity of cultural-social-psychology justified the development of exceptional welfare technologies of remediation, compensation and preservation of immigrant's culture of origin. Yet, advancing statistical monitoring of immigrant families' lives questioned the economic balancing of these exceptional practices, which in turn problematized immigrant families as an economic burden and hence a risk to the public budget.

From the late 1990s, we have identified a shift in the focus from problematizing immigrant families as *at risk* of economic, social and cultural disintegration to problematizing immigrant families as *an epidemic risk* to the cohesion of the local school, community and not least, to national security. An attempt to manage the threat believed to be inherent in the presence of immigrant families was made by 'thinning' the problem in terms of securing the right social and ethnic mix of schoolchildren or ultimately, by deporting criminals with an immigrant background deemed to constitute a threat to national security. These welfare technologies were supported by legislative and juridical gymnastics that would prevent accusations of ethnic or racial discrimination.

We argue that the notions of risk and precariousness run as a common thread in the various practices that have woven together the fabric of the Danish welfare nation-state since the 1970s. This common thread draws our attention to the ontological insecurity supposedly caused by the immigrant presence. As an effect of this ontological insecurity, the liberal

paradox emerges in the fashioning of the modern welfare nation-state. It crystallises as a Janus face which, on the one hand, appears as universalised care for the welfare of the immigrant family balancing between adaptation to a Danish way of living and the preservation of some sort of immigrant cultural heritage in order to maintain a productive workforce. On the other hand, we see an economisation of universal welfare care in regards to immigrant families that fundamentally questions the pay-off of this care, which is followed by technologies of 'thinning' the immigrant presence in order to keep the social body cohesive, competitive, and secure as a means to bolster the welfare nation-state.

Arguably, the increasingly ambiguous governing of immigrant families' welfare outlines how universal welfare has been nationalised in terms of promoting a Danish way of living as its objective, and how national security and cohesion have been presumed to be sustained by universalising the 'thinning' of the immigrant presence by means of juridical gymnastics and social warfare technologies. As such, this article has shed light on how ambiguous practices of making immigrant families precarious and brutally taking care of their welfare seem to have fashioned the fabric of the Danish welfare nation-state since the 1970s.

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Notes

1. Former colleagues of Jørgen Gimbel and researchers Anne Holmen and Christian Horst provided valuable comments to this study and presented us with Jørgen Gimbel's personal archive that he had left them with at his retirement.
2. Twelve major and minor local governments are represented in the material: Albertslund, Ballerup, Brøndby, Copenhagen, Farum, Gladsaxe, Hvidovre, Høje Taastrup, Ishøj, Køge, Odense, and Aarhus. Relatively large immigrant populations inhabit these municipalities, with Copenhagen exhibiting the largest immigrant population.
3. We owe much gratitude to former and current school consultants, Inger Clausen, Mary-Ann Gordon Padovan, Karen Esrom Christensen, Mona Engelbrecht and former teacher and president of the Association of Teachers of Bilingual Pupils (UFE), Else Nielsen for granting us access to their personal archives.

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